



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
PAY-AS-YOU-GO ESTIMATE

November 3, 2000

S. 3239

An act to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide special immigrant status for certain United States international broadcasting employees

As cleared by the Congress on October 31, 2000

S. 3239 would provide up to 100 special immigrant visas in any year for broadcasters employed by the International Broadcasting Bureau and its two grantees: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio Free Asia. Spouses and children would be allowed to accompany those employees to the United States. Enacting this legislation would affect revenues and direct spending by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Department of State, and a number of other federal programs. CBO estimates that because so few special visas would be provided, the act would have no significant budgetary impact.

Under current law, the INS charges a \$110 fee for each person that applies for a special immigrant visa and is authorized to spend such fees without further appropriation. CBO expects that most of the money would be spent in the year in which it is collected and the net impact on INS spending would be negligible.

S. 3239 would also affect fees charged by the Department of State. Under current law, the department charges a \$260 application fee and a \$65 issuance fee for immigrant visas. Those fees are classified as governmental receipts (i.e., revenues). CBO expects the increase in revenues would not be significant. The act could also affect fees charged for fingerprinting and assistance in preparing and filing affidavits of support (INS forms required for most family-based immigrant visas). Those fees are deposited as offsetting collections and made available for spending on consular affairs. The act could increase collections, but spending on consular affairs would be correspondingly higher. Thus, the net budgetary impact would be negligible.

Finally, some of the additional immigrants could become eligible for certain federal public benefits. CBO expects that any increase in direct spending for these benefit programs would not be significant.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Mark Grabowicz (for INS costs), Sunita D'Monte (for revenues and Department of State costs), and Valerie Baxter (for benefit costs). This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.